

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD OF ART



"THE TWO SISTERS," BY PAUL CEZANNE.
On view in Knoedler Galleries.

THE Allies, for so must we know henceforth the Houses of Knoedler, Montross and Stieglitz ("291"), unite in forcing us to consider the question of Cézanne. Stieglitz has worried us with this troublesome painter for years, but he now yields the centre of the stage to the Montross-Knoedler duet. But these galleries begin the new year with exhibitions of works by the wild man from Aix. The Knoedler's art performance will be given by a veritable galaxy of stars AND Cézanne; in the Montross show every turn is by the inimitable artist himself. Of course we shall all have to see both exhibitions. Between them we may be able to make out what all the European pother over Cézanne means. Perhaps, and what joy for us provincials will this be! we may even be enabled to join one of the two great clans, to range ourselves with those who say this painter eclipses Rembrandt or with those who insist that his art is a revolting pretence.

Fortunately there are other "helps" for inquirers than the exhibitions. Certain books and pamphlets about the strange painter have arrived upon these shores and are now available in the public libraries. (If not they ought to be. At least they can be had in the bookshops.) The books give many of the facts of the man's life, and are so interesting that they will be considered valuable even by such connoisseurs as do not as yet admit Cézanne's genius. These assistances are, however, only for those who know French, as Ambrose Vollard's "Paul Cézanne" and Emile Bernard's "Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne" are not yet made into English.

That those who have a natural repugnance for Cézanne's style will be able to overcome it by a study of the works now on view is not at all sure. Pronounced feelings of that kind yield, in my opinion, only in confrontation with extreme crystallizations of style—with the self-explaining masterpieces of which each artist produces but a few. The life of Jean François Millet, which may now be seen in clear perspective, yields an instance. His peasants were as brutal, as untrite, as insane, as sincere as Cézanne's are now until suddenly the "Angelus" made its appearance. There was no reply to that.

It was a great picture. Suddenly there was a sharp interchange of bids, and we read in the newspapers that it had sold for 250,000 francs, a then unheard of price. After that nothing more was said of the "morality" of Millet. The phillistines saw a great light and all of them could hear the church bells ringing in the picture. Not only the "Angelus," but all the other works were at last truly felt to be pious.

Americans had the advantage of seeing the "Angelus" with this extraordinary price mark labelled upon it. We were permitted too, for many years, to see the greatest works of Manet and Monet in the galleries of Durand-Ruel. The price marks were not amazing, then, but they were the actual works that were so wildly disputed on the other side, and we could

join in the fray with as good a will as any. But for similar enlightenment in regard to Cézanne we need his "Card Players," now privately owned in France; a work which, if not as religious, is at least as persuasive as Millet's "Angelus." (For that matter, to me, it is equally religious.)

The artist is always judged by his masterpieces. The mere fact that "Hamlet" is superlative puts it upon a plane immensely above "Macbeth," which would have been superlative itself had it been written by any other than the author of "Hamlet." But if you have not read "Hamlet," you may not be said to know Shakespeare. I have more than once met fellow citizens who had not seen Rembrandt's "Night Watch" nor his "Christ at Emmaus," and who were vainly trying to reach the fervor of those who had, by arduous but unavailing study of the Altman Rembrandts. The Altman Rembrandts have many virtues, and the "Woman Paring Her Nails" explains very well the "late" Rembrandts, but alas, in the case of Rembrandt as in the case of all other artists, one begins with the study of the superlative work.

Vollard's life of Cézanne should be translated at once. In many ways it is a most unusual book. It does Cézanne to the life, but it does much more. It puts the whole background in, with the intriguing juries of the Salons, the ardent hopes and enthusiasms of youthful geniuses, the amusing prejudices of the bewildered phillistines, the generous and sacrificial of the hardy patrons of the new school, and last but not least a full length portrait of a picture dealer having a "corking time" (as Col. Roosevelt expresses it). There is, in short, all the "atmosphere" that produces artists, and no such whiff of this important essence has come to us since "Triby" first explained the joys of student life in language that even brokers could understand. For that reason the book has a double mission. "Triby" sent hundreds of young Americans off to participate in the Parisian revels. Alas, the Paris of little Billee no longer exists. The Vollard book could be widely circulated, might help us to construct an art world of our own. That, however, was probably not our author's primary intention in writing the book. Cézanne emerges from the book in big proportions, and what is most astonishing is that he appears to have been a genius from the beginning. This is contrary to the general idea. Nine people out of ten imagine him to have been a forlorn, old gentleman, who had the pity of his country neighbors and who worked on alone, totally without a comprehension of the quality in his work which, by a strange fluke of fortune, the Parisians suddenly admired.

This impression was not dissipated by the much quoted passage in Emile Bernard's Souvenirs: "We had, hanging on the wall, a little still life by Cézanne that I had bought in Paris at least fifteen years before. I showed it to him. 'Very bad,' commented he. 'It is by you I replied, 'and I think it's very good.' 'Is that the sort of stuff they admire

What will prove astonishing to the public, however, in Vollard's book is the picture of Cézanne's student days with the unavoidable conclusion that even to his fellows of the atelier the young painter was a hero. Part of his popularity may have been due to the fact that he had an allowance from his parents, and always had in his pockets something with which to pay for a friend's dinner; but art students are not entirely time servers, and no amount of pocket money produces the reputation of genius among them.

When Cézanne decided to try to get into the official Salon of 1895, however, he happened not to be "fused" and did not have sufficient sous to pay a commissionaire. So bravely making the most of it he loaded the two canvases—his "Après-Midi à Naples" and his "Femme à la Puce"—were the two of his works most likely to be understood by a "bourgeois" jury, he thought—into a pushcart,

in Paris now? asked Cézanne, 'well then the rest of their work must be pretty poor!'

It is quite true the neighbors were callous, for the neighbors were more than passing ignorant, and it is true that Cézanne scarcely appeared to be aware of what was most admirable in his painting, for geniuses in all the arts are seldom the best judges of their own work, but it does not appear that he was particularly mad, or was ever very far from public scrutiny. There seems always to have been some one believing in him.

At the first there was Zola for a boyish friend. The Zola episodes are charmingly real and strangely pathetic. One would be tempted to call the Zola chapters "documents," were it not now beginning to appear likely that Zola in the future must play second to Cézanne. Zola found a romantic attachment to Cézanne and a third youth, Baptistin Baille, who was equally ambitious, and read aloud to them in a wild and excited spot from de Musset and Hugo. All three dreamed fine dreams and talked big, as fine boys will, but it was Zola who first went out in the world and who gave Cézanne the pull toward Paris. When Cézanne finally arrived in the capital it was Zola who wrote to Baille, left behind in Aix, 'J'ai vu Paul! J'ai vu Paul, comprends-tu cela, toi, comprends-tu toute la mélodie de ces trois mots?'

The comradeship of Zola and Cézanne could not stand the tests that life in the great world put upon it. Alas, there arrived a time when the unknown Cézanne could say of the famous Zola: "C'était une intelligence fort médiocre et un ami détestable; il ne voyait que lui; c'est ainsi que l'œuvre, ou il a prétendu me peindre, n'est qu'une épouvantable déformation, un mensonge tout à sa gloire" (Bernard's Souvenirs). Zola had written "l'œuvre," the life of a painter, and the hero, Paul Lanier, was a study of Cézanne, and this hero's picture was no less than Cézanne's much discussed "Baigneuses"!

The two friends had begun to see less of each other some time before the appearance of the novel. Cézanne's shyness and proudness not being able to stand the restrictions that Zola's increasing importance im-

posed upon both of them. The phrase "detestable friend" that Bernard quotes, however, is not to be taken too seriously, being certainly the too forceful expletive of an irritated man of "temperament." Vollard's answer from Cézanne to the same question is less severe and probably nearer the artist's true feeling.

"One mustn't expect an outsider to say reasonable things upon the art of painting but a de D., and Cézanne began pounding like a deaf man on the table. How dared he say a painter killed himself because he had made a poor picture? When a picture is not a success one chuckles it in the fire and begins another."

Nevertheless in the reported remarks of both Zola and Cézanne it is easy to see that in spite of the separation there was a basis of affection that each guarded for the other. When Cézanne heard of Zola's death he shut himself up all day with his grief and when he spoke of him years afterward the tears came to his eyes. The real tragedy was that Zola died without discovering that his boyish estimation of Cézanne's genius was the correct one. His adult opinion was that still held by the phillistines: "Cézanne had the genius of a great painter, but not the talent to become one." But then Zola's opinion upon matters of art, as poor Paul Cézanne observed, are worthless.

and, with the aid of complacent friends, moved it with laughter and many jokes to the Palais de l'Industrie. Upon his arrival at the Salon Cézanne was the object of an ovation upon the part of the young artists, who carried him about in triumph.

Is it necessary to add that the jury did not partake of this enthusiasm? The two paintings were rejected. This student admiration was followed by the appearance of patrons, and there was even in the early days an amiable picture dealer, Le Pere Tanguy, who was supposed to have a sentimental weakness for unfortunate art students. A list of his protégés, that includes Guillaumin, Cézanne, Van Gogh, Pissarro, Gauguin and Vignon, suggests that his charities were distributed with almost uncanny intelligence.

Cézanne used to leave the key of his studio with Pere Tanguy, and when a customer for the Cézannes presented himself he was conducted to the studio, where he could choose among the paintings, the prices of which were fixed, 40 francs for the small and 100 francs for the large canvases. The "horror," it seems, were cheaper than that at present. There were also a number of canvases upon which Cézanne had flung a number of small studies each, leaving to Pere Tanguy the task of separating



"LA LECON DE MUSIQUE," BY MANET.
On exhibition, Knoedler Galleries.



"WRITING LESSON," BY CARRIERE.
On view, Knoedler Galleries.



"LOGE D'ACTRICE," BY LATOUCHE.
On view, Knoedler Galleries.



"TOILETTE ROSE," BY BONNARD.
On view, Knoedler Galleries.

Edward I. Farmer

Chinese Antiques & Interiors
5 West 56th St. New York

Invites attention to the recent arrival of a particularly fascinating collection of

Chinese Jewelled
Flowering Shrubs—

the leaves and flowers exquisitely carved from Jade, Coral, Lapis lazuli, Turquoise, Crystal and Carnelian of the highest qualities.

The collection of Jade objects and objects carved from other semi-precious stones includes several specimens of
GREAT IMPORTANCE

ARTHUR London

Chinese Art Works

Old Chinese

Porcelains, Jades, Ivories

Beautiful Jade Flower

Trees, Bird Cages

CHINESE RUGS from our own looms at PEKIN, CHINA

17 EAST 45TH STREET

Near the Ritz and Piltmore NEW YORK

W. H. SPEARS Tel. Murray Hill 2285

DANIEL GALLERY

Special Exhibition

AMERICAN ART

OF TODAY

2 WEST 47TH STREET

John Levy

14 East 46th Street

Opposite The Ritz-Carlton

HIGH

CLASS

Paintings

D. B. Butler & Co.

Framed Mezzotints for Gifts

By S. Arlent Edwards and other engravers, from \$10.00 upward

Etchings Frames of all Periods

601 Madison Ave (57 St.)

MONTROSS GALLERY

CÉZANNE

EXHIBITION

January 3rd to 31st

550 Fifth Avenue, above 45th Street

Exhibition of Paintings

by

PICABIO

African Negro Art

Daily 10 A. M. to 6 P. M.

MODERN GALLERY

500 Fifth Ave., Cor. 42 St.—Room 134

WASHINGTON SQUARE GALLERY

47 WASHINGTON SQUARE

WORKS BY ROUSSEAU, PICASSO,

GRIS, BRAQUE, LEGER, RIVERA,

BRENNER, DERAIN, GALANIS, DE

VLAMINCK, CHIN YIN AND OTHERS

REPRODUCTIONS OF ANCIENT AND MODERN ART.

Arlington Galleries

MODERN PAINTINGS

Characteristic Examples

of the

Hudson River School

Always on View

Until Jan'y 15th, 1916

Exhibition of

Pictures of the Arctic and Antarctic Zones

by

F. W. STOKES

274 Madison Avenue

between 34th and 45th Streets

M. Knoedler & Co.

ESTABLISHED 1846

ON FREE VIEW

PAINTINGS

By CONTEMPORARY FRENCH ARTISTS

Including

CEZANNE, LA TOUCHE, CARRIERE

Until January 29, 1916

in the KNOEDLER GALLERIES

556 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK